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MATTER OF FACT

FOR

THE MULTITUDE.

BY A TRUE PATRIOT;

Though neither a Member of the CORRESPONDING SOCIETY, the WHIG CLUB, nor any Affiliated Society of Sedition in Europe.

We doubt not of a fair and lucky war,
Since God ſo graciouſly hath brought to light
This dangerous treaſon, lurking in our way.

SHAKESPEARE'S HENRY V.

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MATTER OF FACT, &c.

COUNTRYMEN,

I STAND not cap in hand to court your plaudits, or avert your cenſures. I am not on the huſtings a candidate for your ſuffrages, nor in the tribune a pander to your paſſions. I have ever loved you, but you know me not at this moment, and the individual will obtrude but ſeldom in the courſe of the following pages. I write not on my own account, but in the hope of being ſerviceable to you; and if unſucceſsful, I ſhall feel the pangs not of diſappointed authorſhip, but of unavailing patriotiſm. I do not even hold out novelty to attract you; I offer to your candour, good ſenſe, and ſober reaſon,—facts and opinions, drawn from ſources the moſt authentic and unqueſtionable. I draw the veil aſide, and leave your judgment and deciſion to do the reſt.

We have heard enough of theories and ſyſtems fabricated in the philoſophical ſchools of politics. They have exhauſted and refuted themſelves, and their day is over; but though the means are varied, the purpoſe remains unaltered: the enemy has changed his poſition, but means not to quit the field. * Revolution is a term at preſent diſſonant

* The French Revolution itſelf is no longer held up ſo loftily to our admiration, as it formerly was, by the liberty men of this country. The enormities

diſſonant and harſh in the ears of an Engliſhman: lenitives muſt be applied to render it palatable to his unphiloſophiſed (or more properly ſpeaking), ſober feelings; and by painting his ſituation the moſt deplorable, and at the ſame moment proffering remedies apparently the moſt moderate, he may by degrees be led to admit licence for liberty, revolution for reform, and the ſhouts of a rabble for the voice of the nation.

We have heard much of parties—of Whigs, new as well as old; of Oppoſition, of Patriots; we have heard their declamations in favour of our liberties; we have ſeen them exhauſt their lungs in the recapitulation of our miſeries, defeats, and degradations; we have ſeen them carouſe at taverns, promote public virtue in public dinners, and ſpread its animating influence in feſtive libations. We have had impending ruin re-iterated to us from the great theatre of St. Stephen's, to the long fields of St. Pancras. No pains have been ſpared—no labour denied; and when the day of extermination arrives, we cannot exclaim—"Of this we have not been forewarned." But leſt appearances, which are ſometimes deluſive, ſhould have led us to miſapply or diſproportion our applauſe, let us fairly inveſtigate the queſtion.

In the political hemiſphere of Great Britain two parties have long exiſted—thoſe In and thoſe Out of power. They have aſſumed dif-

ormities it has generated precludes it from being uſed as an effective weapon in their hands; yet let any man refer to the ſpeeches in our Parliament, and columns in our newſpapers, and he will find that no one meaſure—no one exceſs of France, from the year 1789 to the preſent period—has been recorded without applauſe, or at leaſt without the ſtrongeſt palliatives:† and though the general opinion has compelled individuals to reprobate them in ſucceeding ſtages, yet in the zenith of Roberſpereian tyranny we had a Morning Chronicle to advocate its cauſe.

† *Since writing the above, I find I have been guilty of injuſtice; one exception ſhould have been made in favour of the Directorial Edict, which proſcribed* 20 *or* 30 *Editors (in the revolution of the* 18*th Fructidor), and ſuppreſſed the publication of their Journals. This met with unqualified and general reprobation in* all *the papers of this country.*

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ferent names at different ſeaſons; and though the object has been invariable, the mode of attack has been varied according to exiſting circumſtances and the temper of the times.* In this country every man is a politician, and conſequently each party was ſupported by friends and adherents. It was a matter of comparatively ſmall importance to the people at large which ſide was victorious, ſo that the veſſel was well manned, and the helm in good hands. But is this the caſe now? Is this any longer the ſtate of opinions or parties in England? I anſwer, No. The ordinary means have failed in every point; ambitious men are not eaſily reconciled to diſappointments and the fruſtration of their favourite hopes. The times are pregnant with new doctrines, and with enthuſiaſts or reprobates who would enforce them. Their tendency militates againſt all eſtabliſhments, and againſt all habits; and though I would not willingly involve the

* Extract from a paper, written 20 years ago, entitled, "Obſervations upon the Conduct of Oppoſition." This will illuſtrate what I have obſerved with reſpect to adapting the mode of attack to the temper of the times.—The preſent diſtinguiſhed Leader of Oppoſition was *then* a Leader of Oppoſition, and Admiral Keppel his relative!—"The conduct of Oppoſition during the trial and after the acquittal of Admiral Keppel, is too recent in the recollection of the public to require more than a very general recapitulation—Their abrogating the old forms of the Admiralty, by removing a trial for a Naval offence to the Land, to accommodate their own purpoſes—their appearance at Portſmouth upon the occaſion—their biaſſing witneſſes—their carrying all the indecencies of a play-houſe audience into a court of juſtice—their ſoliciting the officers of the navy—their ſowing diſcontents amongſt the ſeamen—their parading the ſtreets for the purpoſe of inflaming the populace, were ſuch mean, ſcandalous, and unjuſtifiable tricks of faction, as can ſcarcely be paralleled by any example in hiſtory."

Had a certain gallant Admiral (Duncan) been thruſt upon his country for half ſervices—loaded with trophies by means ſuch as thoſe here deſcribed—or made a rallying point for triumph and diſorder by his relation, Mr. Dundas,—an honourable Member (Mr. Jekyl), a ſhort time ſince, would have been regarded, by his country at large, as an upright legiſlative guardian of its peace and liberties, for an attack, upon which, as it now ſtands, I own I have neither inclination nor temper to comment.

leaders of what is termed the oppoſition intereſt in the guilty and revolutionary projects of their new allies, ſtill I do not feel myſelf at liberty, when rouſed by the animating and ſuperior claim of my country, to acquit them of *at leaſt* aiding and abetting the projected overthrow of all we have hitherto held ſacred, by the licentious latitude they allow themſelves in their ſpeeches and conduct upon every public queſtion. Ambition the goad, their patriotiſm (if admitted in the firſt inſtance) is overwhelmed in their party animoſity; and to overthrow a Miniſtry, they would ſcarcely recede from the ſacrifice of the country itſelf. If I were to add, that Mr. Fox has been for theſe laſt 20 years in the pay of France,* you would doubt the juſtice probably, and be inclined to impeach the veracity of ſo bold an aſſertion; but the pay of ambition is not gold: the adulating huzzas of a mob would overbalance the Bank of England, for the moment, in the eſtimation of an aſpiring and infatuated demagogue.

When will men ceaſe to be the dupes of declamation and aſſertion? When will men ceaſe to hoodwink their perception, becauſe thoſe who are intereſted in their blindneſs adviſe it? When will men refuſe to ſwallow the quack noſtrums of a mountebank, becauſe his Merry Andrew recommends them? Do you believe that the Duke of Norfolk a few weeks ſince, when by going rather farther than he meant, (the only defence, except indeed a few miſerable quibbles, ſet up by his friends) was actuated by a ſpirit of patriotiſm, or regard for you? Or do you imagine that Mr. Fox, at the ſubſequent meeting of the Whig Club, when he declared his inclination to be involved in the diſgrace of his noble friend, felt actuated by the pure mo-

* Let any man recur to the conduct of Mr. Fox, and other members of the party, during the American war, and he will find the precedent upon which that Gentleman now acts. He at that time ſpoke to the feelings of the French nation, and his ſucceſs or diſappointment uniformly met their ſympathy and condolance. During the preſent war, his activity has again called forth their admiration and plaudits——*he is the firſt Patriot in the world.* Does the enemy laviſh ſuch admiration, or ſuch plaudits, upon a Duncan, a Jervis, or a Howe?

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tive of aiding your cauſe, or defending your liberties?* You are not—you cannot be ſo blind! His Grace never thought upon the retaliation he was about to meet, or perhaps we ſhould never have heard ſuch toaſts and ſentiments from the noble Preſident. Miniſtry have, as uſual, had their ſhare of abuſe for this retaliation.† But I will conſider it as a meaſure proceeding from the throne itſelf. Let us take the caſe home to ourſelves:—if we had a ſervant, or a dependant, who left his home to traduce, abuſe, and vilify ourſelves or our occupation, in the next public houſe, ſhould we not, think you, feel inclined to diſmiſs him? And though no man can aver that our Sovereign has ever ſuffered his own private feelings to ſupercede the public good, or to interfere with public juſtice, no man can arraign his conduct in this inſtance. Nor does it appear probable that the regiment, which the temerity of the noble Duke has forfeited, will be leſs likely to meet the foe with energy and exertion, becauſe their commander no longer reviles the cauſe in which it is engaged, or extols the virtue and magnanimity of the enemy it is to oppoſe.

Parties have gone great lengths before the preſent day, have done much miſchief, have provoked much ill blood; but the perfection of

* John Wilkes, of patriotic memory (whoſe zeal in the ſervice of liberty and your rights ſet half London in a flame—whoſe love for you knew no bounds, no limits—until it *raiſed him to independence*), was ſtrongly diſſuaded by a friend from publiſhing his famed number Forty-five; but he had ſtudied the part he had to act, and well knew that ſuch a publication could not fail of calling down the vengeance of inſulted laws, and that the very ſhadow of perſecuted patriotiſm was the never-failing parent of popularity.

† It ſeems rather extraordinary that Mr. Fox ſhould in his zeal for his noble partiſan, and in his indignation againſt this *ſtrong meaſure*, have forgotten the removal of Lord Carliſle from the Lord Lieutenancy of the Eaſt Riding of Yorkſhire in 1782, during Mr. Fox's adminiſtration, not becauſe he had braved the wholeſome reſtraints of our laws, not becauſe he had inſulted the ſovereignty of the people in the perſon of their lawful ſovereign—but, becauſe he was not of *the Party*.

Crime enorme aux yeux de Sieur Fox!

Gazette de France du Vendredi, 26 Mars. 1779.

bold and licentious Oppoſition is left for our times. Meaſures have been condemned, and with vigour oppoſed; but men have not been held out to obloquy and popular reſentment till this period of intemperate policy. Till now a Miniſtry could be kept in check, and the balance maintained between the powers veſted in the Crown and the Rights of the People, without reference to foreign policy, or foreign example.* The ſuperiority of the Britiſh conſtitution *was* our favourite creed, and all Europe confirmed us in our love of it. What

* The excellence of our Conſtitution has been ſo generally admitted by every nation, and by every individnal who has impartially analyzed it, that it ſhould ſeem needleſs to offer any thing farther on the ſubject. I cannot help however quoting the opinion of a very great man, in farther confirmation of it, who, though not an Engliſhman, has made our Government his peculiar ſtudy. "The firſt peculiarity of the Engliſh Government is, its having a King—its having thrown into one place the whole maſs (if I may uſe the expreſſion) of the Executive Power, and having invariably and for ever fixed it there. By this very circumſtance alſo has the *depoſitum* of it been rendered ſacred and impregnable. By making one great, very great, man in the State, has an effectual check been put to the pretenſions of thoſe who otherwiſe would ſtrive to become ſuch; and diſorders have been prevented, which, in all Republics, ever brought on the ruin of liberty, and before it was loſt, obſtructed the enjoyment of it."

De Lolme *on the Conſtitution of England, Book* 2d, *Chap.* 1ſt.

Theſe happy effects of a Monarchical form of Government compoſe the very evil of which our reforming politicians in fact complain. They feel themſelves debarred, and their ambititious views reſtrained, by the wholeſome policy of a provident anceſtry. Our forefathers knew that aſpiring men had appeared upon the ſtage of politics, and that they would ſtill appear through every period of human exiſtence; their endeavours were conſequently directed towards a prevention of thoſe evils which they wiſely foreſaw would reſult from the unreſtrained views of aggrandizement and power. Is it then to be conſidered as a matter of aſtoniſhment, that this bar to the hopes of the demagogues, this bulwark of our ſafety againſt their intemperate attacks upon our liberty, ſhould be made ſubject of condemnation, and be marked out by them for deſtruction? Never, ſure, was the above opinion of M. De Lolme ſo ſtrongly confirmed as in the caſe of the French Republic.

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then has ſo ſuddenly metamorphoſed our State? Whence ſo vaſt a revolution of opinion? In the overthrow of a great empire, and in the principles which effected it. But let us aſk, by what invidious compariſon we are to depreciate the bleſſings we ſo lately boaſted? Is it that the Conſtitutions of France, which have ſucceſſively ariſen, afford a more perfect model for our imitation; or is it that we have at once, ſuddenly and unexpectedly, fallen from the ſpirit of our forefathers—that our wiſe inſtitutions are annihilated, and that our ſyſtem is inverted?—I know not which to apply, for each, at different periods, has been the favourite topic of declamation with the Party. For my own part, I conceive both very eaſily anſwered, by a reference, in the firſt inſtance, to the deſpotiſm under which France groans; and, in the latter, to the liberty which every man enjoys in this country, to ſpeak, to act as he feels inclined, provided the laws which are repreſentative of his own delegated power be reſpected. But a party in the country exclaim here—"Our laws are doubled upon us—our Conſtitution is infringed by a multiplication of reſtraints." This is ſtrange ſophiſtry, if ſeriouſly conſidered (which, by the bye, is never intended by thoſe who utter it), that the citadel ſhould be worſe defended by the acquiſition of new powers of defence! However, let us anſwer thoſe who reaſon thus, by a ſimple recurrence to the original intention of laws:—They were, undoubtedly, inſtituted for the ſafeguard of the *good* againſt the power and injuſtice of the *bad* man. From time to time new laws have been introduced for the purpoſe of checking new crimes; ſtill *good men* have experienced no additional reſtraint, nor have they found their liberties impaired. Exceſſes in the world of politics have of late years been committed, which anticedent laws could not reach:*—

ſtronger

* Sufficiently illuſtrated in the State Trials at the Old Bailey. Upon this ſubject it will not be irrelevant to point out to your notice the *broad* and *liberal* ſcale upon which Oppoſition juſtice meets *every ſide* of the queſtion.———When a member of Adminiſtration uſed (or was ſaid to uſe, for I ſpeak from newſpaper report,) the term of *Acquitted*

Felons,

ſtronger ones have ſucceeded upon this ground; but *good* men have experienced no additional reſtraint, nor have they found their liberties

Felons, in ſpeaking of Mr. Horne Tooke, Thelwall, &c. &c. every journal, and every Oppoſition battery, was opened upon him for this libel upon the Jury which had acquitted them. When the event of the trials in Scotland, upon certain other republicans *(in correſpondence with thoſe who eſcaped through the leuiency of the Engliſh law)* was made known, a clamour more violent than the former, and an attack amounting to actual defamation upon Judge and Jury, individually and in a body, was immediately commenced. The health of theſe *Condemned Patriots* was repeatedly toaſted at the Whig Club and Correſponding Society, and the verdict againſt them was made the ſubject of moſt ſevere cenſure upon the laws—a favourite topic of invective againſt Miniſters, and of ſympathy with ſuffering humanity. It may not be amiſs to enquire why this ſubject has been ſo ſuddenly dropt—why this trumpet of alarm for our liberties has no one now to ſound it, when ſo many mouths a ſhort time ſince were inceſſantly applied to it? Perhaps there exiſt ſo many other cauſes of complaint, that this is neceſſarily thrown aſide for their admiſſion. Perhaps—but we need not conjecture—The fact, I am apprehenſive, is ſelf-evident: Mr. Muir, one of thoſe *injured* patriots—thoſe lovers of their country—whoſe efforts in its ſervice the injuſtice of our laws conſtrued into ſedition, and involved in its puniſhment:—Mr. Muir, I repeat, is at this moment in the capital of France, inciting the enemy to the invaſion of this country, and ſupplying that enemy with information on the means!—Mr. Muir publicly avows his hoſtility to his native land, and though his language is neceſſarily more open and bold, his principles are avowedly the ſame that he maintained when Government thought proper to notice them as inimical to our liberties, peace, and ſafety. He ſpeaks of his *ſuffering partiſans* in this country, and the Directory are taught to believe that their "ARMY OF ENGLAND may dictate terms of ſubmiſſion in London, and that they will find auxiliaries and numerous votaries of liberty, who await them there."

Vide *Proclamation of the French Directory, 1ſt Frimaire, Nov.* 21, 1797.

This Mr. Muir is the man who has been openly ſupported by the Whig Club and the Correſponding Society, and has even been thruſt upon the attention of a Britiſh Houſe of Commons as a martyr to the ſeverity of the law!

This

ties impaired. The ſpirit and purpoſe of our law is ſtill the ſame, but the ſpirit of the times demand a more explicit and ſtrong extenſion of it; and we might as fairly be told, that laws ſtrictly enforced againſt freebooters and felons were inimical to the intereſts of ſociety, as that the meaſures which Government has been compelled to take, for the ſecurity of the Conſtitution, were injurious to the rights and liberties of *good* ſubjects.

We are told by Gentlemen in Oppoſition, as well as by thoſe who *profeſs* even ſtronger principles, that we are on the verge of ruin—that our reſources are exhauſted—that our power is at an end—whilſt the enemy is every where triumphant—that an invaſion could not fail of ſucceſs, from the want of unanimity, which the preſent diſtracted ſtate of our affairs has generated—that the arm of our Government is impotent, whilſt the energy and effect of the French Councils hold the fate of Europe—and that the exertions which are now making towards a feeble defence are the expiring ſtruggles of a once great nation. But you will exclaim—"Is there no remedy for all this?" There is a

This Mr. Muir was in correſpondence with the *acquitted gentlemen* of the Old Bailey, the innocence of whoſe *intentions* is ſo ſtrongly ſupported—*by their own aſſertion*; and talked only of parliamentary reform and univerſal ſuffrage. Yet is he—horrible to relate—now in the council of the enemy, an advocate for the ſubjugation of his native land!

You will be told, perhaps, that this gentleman *was* a good and excellent patriot; but that the oppreſſion which he complains of has ſoured and converted him. Rare patriot! So that, admitting his judges were partial, and criminal in the diſcharge of their duty, and that he really fell a martyr to injuſtice and deſpotiſm, his reſentment againſt a few individuals is to arm his ſoul againſt every principle of feeling and of honour, and incite him to throw at the feet of a tyrannical, unprincipled enemy, millions of his own devoted countrymen! Theſe are the pure republican principles which imperiouſly call for the ſacrifice of private feelings and paſſions; which eſtrange the father from his child—the huſband from his wife. Theſe are the principles which *Reaſon* propagates, founded on the rule of right and the law of nature, which withdraw our allegiance from our God, and unſhackle us from the trammels of ſuperſtition!!

remedy

remedy proffered—preſcribed to you by the very friends who have thus ſtated your caſe—a panacea that will nerve the country, reſtore your vigour, fill your coffers, and drive the enemy from your ſhores! —It is A CHANGE OF MINISTRY,* Perhaps you do not perceive how

* I cannot reſiſt giving an opinion at *this* time (July 1797). My prime objection to any propoſed Miniſtry of Mr. Fox and his adherents is this :— I believe their principles are *too popular* for the good, the ſafety, or perhaps for the exiſtence, of this country under its preſent conſtitution. I believe that their deſign is to throw ſuch a weight of power into the Houſe of Commons, *by means of a reform*, as *would* ultimately mould *the two* Houſes of Parliament not merely into a reſemblance, but into the actual form and relative power of the Council of Five Hundred, and the Council of Ancients. I am alſo of opinion, that the authority and influence of the Crown of Great Britain would be reduced far below that which is lodged in the Executive Directory of France. I think the propoſed Reforms *lead*, beyond a controverſy, *to this iſſue*. I conceive that a Great Perſonage, in the caſe of a change of Mr. Pitt's Miniſtry, muſt be apprehenſive *to whom* he is to be delivered, and *to what* he may be reduced. *The Pride* of a ſtateſman's underſtanding, like Mr. Fox's, in the plenitude of dignity, will overbear all ideas of a balance of power in the orders of the ſtate, and of the ſafety of the country, upon its ancient principles. He has declared his opinion; he muſt not recede. All will be ſacrificed *to that pride* in a moment of phrenzy. The example of every ſtate, nation, and city, ſubdued by French arms, French principles, and French treachery, is to be weighed well, as an awful warning *in this* kingdom, which may *yet* be preſerved. The *encroachments* of *ſuch* a ſtateſman as Mr. Fox (paramount as he is in ability, and in *political* eloquence, beyond any man), are to be watched and reſiſted by all who think ſoberly, and are independent of party. Yet Mr. Fox neither could, nor would, ſatisfy the raving and tyrannical ideas of Horne Tooke and the French Crew.† They would make uſe of him to a certain point. They would *then* declare him an enemy to his country, and conduct him to the

† *This was written prior to the famed celebration of Mr. Fox's Birthday, when Mr. Horne Tooke declared himſelf* perfectly *ſatisfied with the extent of Mr. Fox's exertions.*

ſcaffold.

how this change would operate ſo beneficially; and I own myſelf incapable of aſſiſting you in the diſcovery. This only I have to ſay to thoſe, who, from a ſpirit of oppoſition, from party ſpleen, from weakneſs in adhering to men without looking to principles; or who, from their keen and ſenſitive affection for their country, *doubt* every meaſure, and *anticipate* every misfortune,—that, if a man, who profeſſed himſelf my friend, was to take every opportunity of informing my neighbours, amongſt whom I lived on creditable terms, and who were ſatisfied with my dealings, that I ſtood on the verge of bankruptcy—that I had ſold all my valuables piece-meal, to preſerve appearances, but that the laſt effort had been made; and to ſecure themſelves, they ſhould not fail to act upon this information; I am rather inclined to imagine, that, in ſpite of profeſſions, I ſhould no longer conſider that man as my friend, and, ſurely, never conſult or confide in him in the moment of real embarraſſment. Nay, by the common law of the land, I might bring ſuch a man to juſtice for the defamation. Yet in this firſt, this greateſt cauſe—the cauſe of our national reputation, nay, even our national exiſtence— political calumniators are ſuffered, with impunity, to vilify and humble us in the eye of our neighbours; to repreſent us as an eaſy prey to our enemies; to expoſe us as bankrupt; and to employ that liberty, which is the glorious attribute of our Conſtitution, as a weapon to deſtroy the Conſtitution itſelf.

But I have done. I have no quarrel with individuals; and when I name Mr. Fox, I name him as the voice of a party. As to that

ſcaffold. The ſecurity of property, public and private, is ſhaken by the propoſed ſyſtem, and a Revolution (which we never *yet* have known but in mere name) might then be at hand. A government which once relaxes, is not eaſily *recalled* to the vigour of its ancient principles. We have among us ſtateſmen of determined and of true patriotiſm, and we have a King, who has courage, virtue, and firmneſs.

Purſuits of Literature, page 206.

The author of the above work is by no means an advocate or partiſan of Mr. Pitt.

Gentleman's

Gentleman's private virtues, which his friends are ſo forward in obtruding on the world, we have, in a public ſurvey of this nature, nothing to do with them. I have no doubt of them; but I fancy that, if ſuch a conſideration be allowed to weigh in the ſcale of public eſtimation, more reſpectability of character, more integrity in the tranſactions of the world, more punctuality in dealings, more domeſtic virtues, or more ſocial excellencies, exiſt not in the kingdom among an equal number of men, as among thoſe who hold official ſituations in the preſent Adminiſtration.

We are told, that by the weak and wicked conduct of Miniſters, we are involved in an unneceſſary and unjuſt war; a war of their own ſeeking, and their own provoking.

We are told that they have never wiſhed for peace, nor have ever ſincerely made overtures towards it. And we are finally told, that without a Radical Reform in our Conſtitution the country cannot be ſaved.

Let us, then, conſider theſe points; and let us, for God's ſake, judge, in ſome degree, for ourſelves.

With reſpect to the unqualified and unſupported aſſertions ſo confidently made, and ſo unceaſingly repeated, with reſpect to the firſt point, it would be needleſs to attempt a refutation beyond flatly denying the fact, did not the bold confidence which has accompanied it, and which Government, holding no club or meeting where the members of Adminiſtration might defend themſelves *unchecked by parliamentary forms*, has no means of meeting or combatting upon fair ground, demand a more clear expoſition. That France had, long before the appearance of hoſtility, determined upon war with this country, no man who has any knowledge of the ſubject, who has had any inſight into the policy of that country, or who has no ſiniſter end to anſwer, will deny. Had the Britiſh Miniſtry been as blind to the deſigns of France as Oppoſition ſeem to wiſh it had been, we ſhould with juſtice have petitioned his Majeſty to diſmiſs Mr. Pitt from his councils, and have committed him to merited obloquy and contempt. But the contrary is the fact. That Miniſtry watch-

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ed with a jealous and penetrating eye the movements of the enemy, and clearly ſaw that England was next to be attacked; that ſhe was to be lulled into imaginary ſecurity by profeſſions of amity, until the undermining ſyſtem of diviſion and inſurrection had rendered the people untractable and adverſe to meet thoſe friends in arms who came to affiliate and fraternize with them

Fully convinced of all this, Mr. Pitt of courſe diſregarded the demand of France to deſiſt from making preparations for defence; when ſhe herſelf, for months before, had been buſied in fitting out her navy.* And though the diſmiſſal of M. Chauvelin, whoſe intrigues and cabals in the country were too palpable at length to admit of further connivance, was made the plauſible pretext for hoſtility, yet the fact is eſtabliſhed, beyond all controverſy, that the Americans were courted to a marine coalition againſt Great Britain long before the event of that diſmiſſal.† I cannot more ſatisfactorily illuſtrate what I have urged,

* At this very period, Monge the Marine Miniſter, in his Addreſs to the Sea Ports, declares the intention of France to fly to the ſuccour of Engliſh Republicans; to make a deſcent in the iſland; to lodge there 50,000 caps of liberty; to plant the ſacred tree; to ſtretch out her arms to her Republican brethren, and to deſtroy the tyranny of the Britiſh Government.

" † It is perfectly well known that ſhe long ſince formed, and ſtill purſues with the moſt ſteady perſeverance, a ſyſtem of aggrandiſement in Europe; for inſuring the ſucceſs of which, it is abſolutely eſſential that the maritime power of England ſhould be reduced. Germany oppoſed barriers to her by land, which were alſo to be removed. Accordingly Germany was to be divided, and a maritime coalition formed againſt England. Of this coalition the United States were to form an important part; for though we had no navy, it was known that we had the means of ſpeedily forming one; and that when once engaged in the war, we ſhould be obliged to exert them. The great number of our merchant ſhips, in the mean time; the ſkill, numbers, and enterpriſing character of our ſeamen; the abundance of proviſions and naval ſtores in our country; the convenience of our harbours; and above all, our vicinity to the Weſt Indies, where the commerce and navy of England are moſt ſuſceptible of a deep and deadly wound, would have rendered

urged, than by laying before you an extract from a work which more forcibly calls upon your attention, perhaps, than any that has ever yet been offered to it. The author, Mr. Harper, is an American; a man of character and high reſpectability, and a Member of Congreſs. He makes no aſſertions which he does not prove upon facts, and he attempts to eſtabliſh no poſition without referring to unqueſtionable documents. The obſervations I have extracted fall in the courſe of a work written in defence of American meaſures, oppoſed to French intrigue, and can in no wiſe be conſtrued into a party production in favour of the Government of this country. Mr. Harper has never been partial to this country, and in his ſtatements reſpecting it, confines himſelf to matters of fact that fall within his own immediate knowledge, as illuſtrative of the univerſal ambition and ill faith of France.

"With reſpect to England, it is perfectly certain that France was the aggreſſor. Beſides the facts and papers which ſpeak for themſelves, the point is eſtabliſhed by the poſitive teſtimony of three French writers, all well informed, and two of whom acted a very conſiderable part in the revolution, and in the war. Theſe are Calonne, Briſſot, and Dumourier; all of whom affirm that France attacked

dered us a moſt important ally in a maritime war againſt that power. To cut off our commerce with her at the ſame time, the importance whereof to her, though certainly great, has been far over-rated by France, would greatly aid the blow.

"Accordingly we find, that as ſoon as the Republic and the power of the Jacobin leaders were eſtabliſhed, and before the war with England commenced, Mr. Genet was ſent out with expreſs inſtructions to bring about this alliance; and I have been aſſured by a gentleman, who about that time acted a conſiderable part in the Convention, but has ſince viſited America, that this maritime coalition was early deviſed, and that "nothing was wanting to its completion but the conſent of the United States." "That conſent," he added, with an air of reſentment which four years have not been able to allay, "*was applied for, and was refuſed.*"

HARPER's Obſervations on the Diſpute between the United States and France.

tacked England. Briſſot was a leading member of the Convention at that time; and when he was afterwards brought to the block, one of the charges againſt him was, his having been the author of the attack. He replied, that Robeſpierre's party were the authors of it: but he did not ſay that France was not the aggreſſor, which would have been a complete juſtification. On the contrary, he aſſerted that France was the aggreſſor moſt unwiſely, and that Robeſpierre's party had induced her to become ſo. In his appeal to his Conſtituents, he ſays the ſame thing over and over. In this appeal, page 47, he expreſsly aſſerts, that England *did not begin to arm till three months after France.* He alſo ſays, page 60, "that a determination had been made to brave all Europe."

"In October, 1792, the Convention, as appears by the ſame authority, had ordered formidable naval equipments to be made, *in expectation of a war with the maritime powers.* This was previous to moſt, if not all, of thoſe acts on the part of England, which France made the grounds of her declaration of war.

"Dumourier loudly charges the Convention with having driven England into the war, which he repeatedly declares might eaſily have been avoided.

"It muſt at the ſame time be admitted, that although the combined powers were attacked and driven into the war in their own defence, yet, when they found themſelves engaged in it, and began to entertain proſpects of ſucceſs, they alſo began to form projects of aggrandizement at the expence of France. It is alſo highly probable that moſt of the powerful Governments became very little averſe from war, when they found reaſon to ſuppoſe that France, by her internal commotions, and the univerſal indignation which the execution of the king and the murders at Paris had excited againſt her, had become an eaſy prey. It is not, however, the leſs true that France began the war, particularly againſt Holland and England, which for a long time ſhewed every appearance of deſiring peace.

"England

" England for awhile was let alone. It was not the ſeaſon yet for attacking her, till Auſtria and Pruſſia ſhould be exhauſted, Holland, ſubjugated, and Belgium annexed to France. The maritime coalition, moreover, had not yet been formed; conſequently the plan againſt England was not yet ripe. Correſpondence in the mean time was kept up with the revolutioniſts in England and Ireland; open encouragement was held out to them, and their deputations had public audiences from the French Convention.

" The Britiſh Government was alarmed at theſe meaſures. It alſo took umbrage at the proceedings in Belgium, and the attacks made on Holland, with which laſt it was in alliance. It complained of theſe attacks, and of the decrees whereby the Convention had made a formal promiſe of ſupport to the inſurgents of every country. The Convention juſtified the attacks on Holland, and aſſured England that the decrees had been miſunderſtood; that they meant nothing at which any Government ought to be offended, and were only to be executed in caſes where a whole people, having reſolved to change their Government, ſhould call for the aſſiſtance of France. On the ſame day when theſe aſſurances were made, the Convention ſent Commiſſioners into Belgium to execute thoſe decrees, with inſtructions to " to treat as enemies all perſons, *and even whole countries*, which ſhould refuſe to alter their Governments according to her will."

" England, in the mean time, juſtly conſidering theſe explanations as deceptive and unſatisfactory, went on with her preparations for the defence of herſelf and her ally. France required her to deſiſt; and when ſhe refuſed, and ſent away a Miniſter who employed himſelf in exciting ſedition, war was declared againſt her. This war many of the politicians of France condemned, *becauſe it was declared too ſoon*; and yet they confeſſed that France had begun to arm for it three months before England.*

From

" * If any are in doubt of all this, or ignorant of it, they are requeſted to read the correſpondences between France and Auſtria, thoſe between England

From this, and much other matter, which would be tedious and unavailing to repeat, we cannot but admit the fact of France being the

England and France, the ſpeeches and reports of Briſſot, and his Addreſs to his Conſtituents, and the relation publiſhed by Chauſſard, one of the commiſſioners for executing the decrees in Belgium, wherein he gives an account of his own proceedings, and explains the plans of the Convention. The reply to Briſſot's Addreſs by Camille Deſmoulins, in behalf of the Robeſpierrian party ſhould alſo be conſulted; and Necker's Addreſs to the French in behalf of Louis the ſixteenth. Briſſot, in one of his Letters, declares, "we, the French, muſt ſet fire to the four corners of Europe." Camille Deſmoulins, in his reply, aſſerts, "that to *diſorganize Europe* was "one of the ſublime vocations of the Convention." Briſſot, in his addreſs, aſks "what did enlightened Republicans wiſh before the 10th of Auguſt? "(the day when the king was dethroned.) Men who wiſhed for liberty "not only for their own country, but for all Europe? They believed that "they could generally eſtabliſh it *by exciting the governed againſt the gover-* "*nors, and letting the people ſee the facility and advantage of ſuch inſurrections.*" But Chauſſard explains himſelf and developes the ſyſtem, moſt fully. "No "doubt," ſays he, "it was the intereſt of France to raiſe and ſecure *by con-* "*queſt* the trade of the Belgic provinces, ſo crampt by that of Holland; and "thence to threaten and alarm the United Provinces, to place our aſſignats "on the very deſks of their counting houſes, *there to ruin the bank of Eng-* "*land*, and in ſhort, to complete the revolution of the money ſyſtem. It "was the intereſt of France to monopolize, as it were, theſe vaſt imple- "ments of trade, theſe manufactories of national proſperity. It was the "intereſt of France to weaken her mortal enemy, (the Emperor) to "cramp his efforts *to aggrandize herſelf with his ſpoils*: In ſhort, to mu- "tilate the Coloſſus of Auſtria, by rending from him theſe fertile provinces "of Belgium, for obtaining and ſecuring the poſſeſſion of which, he has, "for ages, been laviſh of gold, of blood, and of intrigues."

"Thus alſo it was the intereſt of France to mutilate the Coloſſus of England, by rending from him the colonies in America. And yet ſhe tells us, and the Belgians, of her *diſintereſted ſervices* in giving us our independence.

the aggreſſor in the war, and that miniſters, far from incurring cenſure or meriting the opprobrium, which Oppoſition had ſo unceaſingly

" England and Pruſſia," continues Chauffard, in the words of a ſpeech which had been delivered in the Convention, and approved of by it, " know " very well that France had the greateſt intereſt to ſubſtitute a popular and " repreſentative government for the ariſtocratic and degenerate one that actu- " ally exiſts in Holland; that *with the forces* of that country, France would " *irrecoverably deſtroy the trade of England*, and by means of her navy ſoon " command the Baltic; that all that would be wanting would be the renewal, " in that part of the North, of an alliance of ſituation then become " neceſſary; and, that an intimate union between France and Holland " being once formed, *the ſupremacy of the Engliſh trade, both in the Eaſt and " Weſt Indies, would rapidly diſappear*; while Pruſſia on her ſide, would ir- " recoverably loſe, ſooner or later, all her poſſeſſions in Weſtphalia."

" Here the plan ſtands confeſſed. The Emperor was to be ſtripped in Belgium, and the King of Pruſſia in Weſtphalia. The bank of England was to be ruined by operations in Holland, and a popular government ſubſtituted in that country, in order to place its forces under the direction of France, and with theſe forces, aided by her own, France was to deſtroy, irrecoverably, the trade of England in Europe, and make its ſupremacy both in the Eaſt and Weſt Indies rapidly diſappear. And all this was to be effected, by ſetting fire to the four corners of Europe, and exciting the people every where to inſurrection againſt the government. It muſt be confeſſed that a project ſo atrocious in it's end, and ſo abominable in its means, has never been conceived before, not even by the Romans.

" While all this was going on, the Convention, in order to hoodwink England, was making to her the moſt ſolemn aſſurances of pacific intentions. It even carried its diſſimulation to the almoſt incredible length of requeſting the mediation of England to bring about a peace with Pruſſia and the Emperor.

" A further and a very ſtrong confirmation of theſe points is found in the date of the inſtructions to Genet, the manifeſt object of which was to bring the United States into a war againſt Great Britain. Theſe inſtructions were ſigned January 3d, 1793; the ſupplementary inſtructions, January 17th, 1793; Mr. Chauvelin was ordered to quit England, January 24th, 1793; and war was declared againſt England, February 1ſt, 1793. If this diſmiſſal

ingly and laviſhly beſtowed upon them, have honourably maintained the dignity, whilſt they conſulted the intereſts, of the country committed to their charge and guidance. With reſpect to the aſſertion that Miniſters do not wiſh for peace, and that they have never ſincerely made overtures, what probability is there, that, had our Government been led to temporize with the enemy, we ſhould, at this moment, have been in a better ſtate than we actually are? Look but to the countries now ſubjugated by France—ſubjugated by treachery, betrayed by profeſſions, and humbled to the duſt. Had we fallen down before her, and ſuffered our independence to ſleep, think you we ſhould have fared better than our neighbours? Had we tamely ſubmitted to have laws and meaſures dictated to us, or ſuffered Frenchmen to inculcate French principles, would the event of an invaſion, or its ſucceſs, remain, at this moment, a matter of doubt?* No; our independence is our palladium; and that independence, once ſhaken, falls to riſe no more!

diſmiſſal was the occaſion of the war, as France alledged, why thoſe inſtructions before the diſmiſſal? Had France been diſpoſed for peace, as ſhe alledged, would ſhe, on account of this diſmiſſal, have declared war within ſix days after it took place?

"And yet there are men, men too of talents and information, who remain blind to all this! Who, while France was openly forming projects of empire againſt all her neighbours, and openly preſſing forward their execution, by every mean of artifice and force, believed that ſhe was injured and attacked, becauſe in the face of her own acts ſhe ſaid ſo! From a late pamphlet, publiſhed by Mr. Erſkine, and containing an ingenious and plauſible apology for the Engliſh Oppoſition, it appears, that he and his friends in Parliament, who certainly have high pretentions to ability and information, are ſtill perſiſting in this error of regarding only the *declarations* of France, and wholly overlooking her *actions*."

Extract from Mr. HARPER's Obſervations, page 47.

* Let the preſent conduct of France towards the neutral and generous people of Switzerland, anſwer to this point.

Look but to Belgium,* to Holland,† to Italy, to Venice, the *neutral power* Venice, whoſe territory they entered, whoſe Governmen

" * The Emperor's dominions in Belgium being at a great diſtance from his other territories, and in the cloſe neighbourhood of France, were expoſed to an immediate and eaſy attack. They were alſo thought more obnoxious to the weapon of *inſurrection* than any other country; for though they enjoyed the freeſt Conſtitution of any people on the Continent of Europe, except the Swiſs and Dutch, ſome invaſions of their rights, attempted by a former Emperor, had planted deep the ſeeds of diſcontent and diſtruſt.—Theſe attempss had been given up by Auſtria; but the jealouſy and reſentment inſpired by them were far from being extinguiſhed. Theſe ſparks it was the care of France to fan by emiſſaries and promiſes; and, when her armies entered the country, they were preceded by declarations, that they came as the friends of the people, to aſſiſt them in breaking the chains of their ancient tyrants.

" We have already ſeen what kind of friendſhip it was which they had for the Belgians, and how the chains of this deluded people have been broken. *They have been plundered of every thing they poſſeſſed, to repleniſh the treaſury of France, drained of their reſources to ſupport her armies, and are now ſubject to a military government.*"

" † In the winter of 1794, the French armies having over-run Belgium, and being favoured by the intenſe cold, which covered the rivers with ice, marched into Holland. On the 20th of January, a few days after their arrival, the French Commiſſioners with the army publiſhed a proclamation, in which they told the Dutch—" In the midſt of war, we conſider " you as our friends and allies. It is under this name that we enter your " country; we ſeek not to terrify, but to inſpire you with confidence. It " is but a few years ſince a tyrannic conqueror preſcribed you laws; we " aboliſh them, and reſtore your freedom."

" We come not to make you ſlaves—the French nation ſhall preſerve to " you your independence."

" Perſonal ſafety ſhall be ſecured, and property protected."

" All this was very friendly, and the Dutch very good-naturedly believed it; more eſpecially as the French generals, when they were approaching the country, had conſtantly repeated the ſame thing. They, however, ſoon found their miſtake.

" Seven

ment they revolutionized, whoſe fleets they ſeized, whoſe treaſures they plundered, and whom they aſſigned over like a bale of goods to the

" Seven days after this firſt proclamation the ſame Commiſſioners, having now been admitted into all the towns with their troops, and obtained complete poſſeſſion of the country, publiſhed a ſecond, in which they " for- " mally invited" the Dutch Government to furniſh the army, within one month, with the following ſupplies, viz. 200,000 quintals of wheat, 500,000 rations of hay, 200,000 rations of ſtraw, 500,000 buſhels of corn, 150,000 pair of ſhoes, 20,000 pair of boots, 20,000 coats and waiſtcoats, 40,000 pair of breeches, 150,000 pair of pantaloons, 200,000 ſhirts, and 50,000 hats; and beſides all this 12,000 oxen, to be delivered in two months. This requiſition they call " their *amicable* intentions," which they flatter themſelves the citizens and the government will ſhew equal zeal to ſecond; and in the execution whereof, they hope that " the ſlow forms of ordinary ad- " miniſtration, and all doubts about the want of authority, which might " impede the operation, will be carefully ſet aſide." And they give the Dutch to underſtand, that, in caſe the articles were not furniſhed, *they ſhould be exacted by force.*

" It was now too late to heſitate; the French had croſſed the rivers, their army was in the country, and the Dutch had opened their gates to theſe " reſtorers of their liberty; they were therefore obliged inſtantly to com- " ply," and on the ſame day they addreſſed a proclamation to the people, informing them of the demand, and directing them to furniſh their reſpective proportions. In this proclamation they remind the people of the " ab- " ſolute neceſſity of furniſhing the ſupplies, without the ſmalleſt delay, and " of the diſtreſs to which they muſt expoſe themſelves *if they manifeſt the* " *leaſt unwillingneſs, or even procraſtination.*"

" This, however, was only the commencement. They ſubſiſted their armies in Holland during the winter, took every thing they wanted, and paid in depreciated aſſignats at par; and finally, they forced the Dutch to form an offenſive and defenſive alliance with them againſt England for ever. The treaty was ſigned on the 15th of May, 1795. It obliges the Dutch to cede to France, " as indemnities," two of their moſt important frontier towns, with the adjoining territories, and one of their provinces; to admit French garriſons, in caſe of war in that quarter, into three other of their ſtrongeſt frontier towns; to admit a French garriſon, both in peace and war, into one

the Emperor. Look to Genoa, more than neutral,—a friendly ſtorehouſe to the perfidious Republicans: Look, I repeat, to all

of their principal ſea-ports; to give France the free navigation of one of their principal rivers; to employ half their forces in carrying on the preſent campaign, under the command of French generals; and finally, to pay France, as a further indemnification for the expences of the war, one hundred millions of livres, equal to twenty-five millions of dollars, in caſh or bills of exchange on foreign countries.

"In addition to this, it has lately appeared from the ſtatements made to the Dutch government, by a committee of finance, that, for fourteen months then paſt, the Dutch had paid two millions of dollars per month, amounting in the whole to twenty eight millions, for the ſupport of the French armies. To theſe two ſums add the value of the firſt contribution which was exacted in kind, and they amount at the leaſt to fifty five millions of dollars, two thirds of the whole expences of our revolution. *Of this enormous ſum have the Dutch been plundered by France, under the name of amity and alliance, in leſs than two years*; and in addition to the immenſe amount of aſſignats they have been forced to receive, to the ſurrender of a whole province, of their five ſtrongeſt frontier towns, and of a principal ſea-port, and to the employment of one half of their troops in the ſervice of France.

"In return for all this, the French have driven away the Stadtholder, and changed the government. They have not ſuffered the Dutch, however, to adopt one to their own mind. A convention was called for that purpoſe, a great majority of which was for a federal republic. The minority, having oppoſed this plan in vain, ſent two of their members to Paris to obtain the interference of the French government. The French government did interfere, and the majority was forced to yield. The plan of government, which this great majority had favoured, was now rejected, and a different form, more ſuitable to the views of France, was impoſed on the nation.

"The Dutch have alſo obtained, in addition to all theſe proofs of amity, an offenſive and defenſive war with France againſt England, in which they have already loſt all their rich poſſeſſions in the Eaſt Indies, the Cape of Good Hope, a great part of their fleet, and the remains of their trade.

"The *eaſy conditions* granted to the Dutch were complained of in the French convention; and it was alledged, that the commiſſioners had not drawn

all theſe examples,—and let us be informed upon what rational grounds we have a right to ſuppoſe that our ſituation would

drawn from Holland all the advantages which the Republic had a right to expect. The commiſſioners juſtified themſelves by alledging, that it would have been *impolitic* to demand harder conditions *at firſt*, becauſe, in that caſe, the Dutch might have been driven to *reſiſtance*.

" Thus we ſee openly avowed and approved, the ſyſtem of coaxing a nation into their power, under the pretence of rendering it ſervices, and then plundering and oppreſſing it without bounds of remorſe, under pretence of receiving a reward for thoſe ſervices; and this by a government which has talked to us of our *perfidious neutrality!*

" Without entering into ſo minute a detail reſpecting Belgium, it will be ſufficient to ſtate, that the French entered this unfortunate country under repeated and ſolemn promiſes of protection and freedom. No ſooner had they obtained poſſeſſion by the ſucceſs of their arms and the favour of the inhabitants, who were fooliſh enough to confide in their promiſes, than they put every article of property which could be of uſe to their armies into requiſition, and compelled the people to receive payment in depreciated aſſignats at par. They next levied immenſe pecuniary contributions on all the towns. They ordered meaſures to be taken for compelling the people to exchange their money for aſſignats at par. They placed the country under the government of military commiſſioners. Finding that a majority of the conventions, which they had aſſembled under the pretence of making the people free, were adverſe to their views, they diſſolved theſe conventions by force, though freely choſen by the people; and this for the expreſs purpoſe (to uſe the words of one of their commiſſioners, in the account of his proceedings) " of raiſing up the *minority*, and deſtroying, or counterba-
" lancing, the power of an *anti patriotic majority*."

" Having thus afforded " liberty and protection" to the Belgians, having thus, " broken their chains, and releaſed them from the yoke of their " ancient tyrants," *they proceeded to ſeize and confiſcate, for their own uſe, the whole property of the clergy in Belgium, to the amount of more than two hundred and fifty millions of dollars.*"

Extract from HARPER's Obſervations, page 47.

have been different, or our country an exception to this general ſcheme of French ambition. There are none, believe me. I have no heſitation, then, in ſaying, in oppoſition to any unſupported aſſertions to the contrary, that the war in which we are engaged, was both juſt and neceſſary in it's commencement.

I need ſay but little with reſpect to the ſecond point; viz. the inſincerity of Miniſters in their profeſſions of peace —The contrary is ſo decidedly proved by the correſpondence laid undiſguiſedly open to you all, that it would be an inſult, inſtead of a defence, to attempt enforcing by argument what is ſo evident in fact. I do not aver, that there are no terms on which Miniſters might have procured peace; on the contrary, I am convinced there are; terms which would have been met with avidity by the French Directory. I will ſubmit them to you, and we ſhall then be enabled to decide on the extent of the guilt chargeable on our Government for not having embraced them.

To reduce thoſe fleets which have defended our commerce and our independence.*

To cede every capture we have made during the war, and to confirm our enemies in the poſſeſſion of all they have made.†

To appeal to the ſovereignty of the French people in the internal regulations of the ſtate, and to compenſate (from the riches of Europe, which they pronounce to be concentrated in this iſland) for the expences they have incurred in the proſecution of the war againſt us;‡ and finally to overthrow and revolutionize that government, whoſe firmneſs and policy have braved their threats, baffled their

* Vide the Speech of Barras to Buonaparte, on his preſenting the ratification of peace with the Emperor.

† Vide Correſpondence of Lord Malmeſbury at Liſle.

‡ Vide Proclamation of the Executive Directory, 1ſt Frimaire, (Nov. 21) 1798.

attacks

attacks, and maintained our independence.* Theſe terms, I heſitate not to ſay, would have been treated upon, as preliminaries *at leaſt*; yet I ſtrongly ſuſpect, and (for the honour of my country) ſincerely hope that, though Mr. Pitt's popularity has by no means increaſed on the other ſide the water—on this it has not decreaſed by the rejection of them.† This then will not, I conceive, impeach the ſincerity of Miniſters in the negociations for peace—Let us now then look to the laſt point—that without a radical reform, the country cannot be ſaved. We need no dictionary explanation of the word reform; it has been defined by its partizans upon innumerable occaſions, and papers on record in the ſtate trials at the Old Baley will fully explain its extent. Nothing ſhort of a predetermined reſolution to keep our

* Vide the above Proclamation.

† The Addreſs of the Biſhop of Llandaff to his Fellow Citizens, is in the hands of every man; and few there are, who feel as men or Britons, in the preſent criſis, who do not partake of his feelings and principles. An inſtrument, however, in the hands of Sedition, (a Diſſenter ſtiling himſelf Gilbert Wakefield) has dared to anſwer the moderate philanthropic patriotiſm of his Lordſhip (whoſe pen has never been taken up but in the cauſe of ſcience or general benevolence) in terms the moſt illiberal, and in language whoſe intemperance is only to be equalled by the daſtardly doctrines it would impoſe.—This patriot eſteems us a nation of poltroons, and openly invites the enemy to an eaſy conqueſt.—He undiſguiſedly attacks the eſſence of our conſtitution, and our eſtabliſhed religion.—He calls himſelf the friend of his country; yet unequivocally tells us that he cares not if we fall under the tyranny, and become like Holland a colony of France.—He foretels impending deſtruction, and glories in the (aſſerted) contemptibility of our force to meet it.—And whilſt he lifts the name of a Buonaparte above the very ſtars, our own gallant commanders are loaded with opprobrious compariſons, and our troops overwhelmed with accuſations of cowardice and diſaffection. Yet, countrymen, this gallant patriot, this common friend to you all, this revolutionizer and arbiter of the fate of empires, would ſuffer invading armies to land upon your ſhores, patiently wait the reſult, and bow to them when they knocked at the door of his ſtudy—*Poor man!!*

eyes

eyes ſhut, can poſſibly blind us to the purpoſes of reform. Whence aroſe the French Revolution? From reform. Whence have ariſen all the plunder, anarchy, and devaſtation, which the Continent of Europe diſplays to our eyes? From reform. Whence the ſubjugation of Holland, of Belgium, of Venice, of Genoa, but from reform. I do not affirm that there are no points in the public œconomy of this country which might not be amended, no individual parts of the ſyſtem that might not be improved. There undoubtedly are; and as undoubtedly ever will exiſt ſome imperfection in the moſt perfect inſtitutions of man. But is it the correction of them; is it, do you believe, the amendment of a few inſignificant points, that the Reformers ſo eagerly pant for; points in themſelves even on which theſe advocates for pure government are daily differing? Or are you ſo weak as to imagine, that ſuch zeal, ſuch eagerneſs, ſuch enthuſiaſm, would be excited by a few corruptions in our national inſtitutes? Why, in that caſe, is France groaning under the moſt heavy load of corruption ever ſent to afflict mankind, repreſented to you through an inverted glaſs as the country of liberty? Why are her victories, her powers, her reſources, held up to your wonder and admiration?—But to tell you, that republicaniſm encreaſes the natural energy, that revolution new nerves the vigour of mankind. They would enamour you with a name, and rip up your liberties with a gilded poignard. Theſe men have been told that, admitting the neceſſity of reform, exiſting circumſtances render the attempt at preſent pregnant with difficulty and danger. This opinion has been artfully attacked through the medium of ridicule, and hackneyed about upon every occaſion, by the oppoſite party, as the plauſible pretext of *corruption* to continue its career. But is there a man ſo infatuated as to deny the juſtice and policy of it? Would you, with an impetuous robber at your door, ſurrounded on every ſide by his banditti, ſtop to put your chairs and tables in order before you ſet about defending yourſelf? Would a man, on the brink of ſtarvation, think of mending a hole in his coat? Or ſhall we check the energy of our nature, and yield to the arms of an ambitious and implacable

foe,

foe, becauſe we have internal arrangements which call for reform? Shall we fall to blows among ourſelves, for the correction of a handful of evils, when the very exiſtence of our country, the preſervation of our laws, liberties, and religion, is threatened by an ambitious and implacable enemy?——No, countrymen, believe me, exiſting circumſtances are inimical to internal innovation; but exiſting circumſtances are what theſe Reformers have looked towards for the ſucceſs of their machinations. In the hour of tumult, remedies are haſtily adopted; and they know that the firſt ſtep towards our ruin depends upon a change in our conſtitutional ſyſtem. Hence the clamour againſt every department of it, and an appeal for reform, ſometimes cloaked by an aſſerted wiſh of employing conſtitutional means; at others, with unprecedented effrontery and hardihood, holding out thoſe of a violent and coercive nature. But you will ſay, Who are theſe that you ſpeak of? Are they not Engliſhmen? Are they not our countrymen? Why then accuſe them of ſeeking the overthrow of their parent country? They are your countrymen, I bluſh to own it, and your enemies at the ſame time. I would not uſe vague unqualified aſſertions, nor do I implicate all thoſe perſons who have lent their names to the party. I only blame *them* for giving weight to a ſet of men, who, unprotected by ſuch authority, would long ago have met the contempt and infamy they merit.* Treaſon and

* I ſhall make no obſervations upon the arreſt of Mr. Arthur O'Connor, or his aſſociates, on their way to France. Time, and the inveſtigation of a Court of Juſtice, muſt decide upon the point of their guilt or innocence. I ſpeak of him prior to this event, and this note was written before it took place. Mr. O'Connor was the avowed and regiſtered editor, printer and proprietor of a Dublin newſpaper called *The Preſs*, ſo inflammatory, ſo ſeditious, I might ſay ſo rebellious in its principles, and ſo bold in the propagation of them, that he thought it prudent to retire from his poſt in Ireland, to avoid the vengeance which was preparing for him by the laws which he had ſo licentiouſly braved. Yet, ſtrange to relate, on his arrival in this country, ſo ſituated, ſo marked, his ſociety was not merely tolerated

and Atheiſm, principles unnatural and execrable in their nature, would have overwhelmed their abettors in the moment of their expoſition. But ambition knows no bounds, and weakneſs is the lot of humanity. Many are drawn into the vortex for want of conſideration, or of intellect; whilſt others, to gratify their time-ſerving principles, raiſe themſelves on the ſhoulders of their leſs ſubtle neighbours, and become ſelf-created patrons of liberality, and champions of liberty: thoſe I pity—theſe I deſpiſe. But the enemies of whom I have to ſpeak, have not confined themſelves to words or to aſſertions.—Checked in their open career here, they have entered into the ſervice and pay of France. We have traitors in the heart of this country, and journaliſts, who, I boldly aver, are in the

tolerated, but courted and cultivated with pride by men and members of the Oppoſition! I forbear a comment.

I have ſelected a few paſſages from ſome numbers of *The Preſs* now before me, that you may decide for yourſelves under what head ſuch a paper ſhould be claſſed.

"People! your maſters are alarmed, &c. &c. Whilſt they thought you "diſunited, and unable to reſiſt tyranny, they reviled and inſulted you" "&c. &c. But at the name of the GREAT NATION *(we have ſhewn you* "*how great)* they ſhrink into their own worthleſsneſs.—Already they hear "its thunders breaking on their heads, and ſee its armies pouring deſtruc-"tion on them." PRESS, February 17, 1798.

"Green has been recently adopted by the *revolutioniſts* of Swit-"zerland, as emblematical of the cauſe of republican liberty and union. "It was odious to the Ariſtocrats, &c. &c. But lo, the French Republi-"cans touched the territory, the Green Standard was hoiſted, the patriots "crowded round it, and it promiſes to overcome every obſtacle. *May that* "*colour, which has been choſen to characterize the cauſe of liberty and union by* "*ſome of the beſt and braveſt people in the world, be finally, compleatly, and* "*ſpeedily triumphant.*" PRESS, February 22, 1798.

When avowed principles, ſuch as theſe, (I have not ſelected the ſtrongeſt) command the political acceſſion and friendſhip of Members of the Britiſh Parliament, I think it were criminal to be any longer off our guard.

hire

hire of the French Directory.* We daily ſee them depreciate our ſucceſſes, endeavour to wound our ſpirit, to depreſs our energy, and to give the death-blow to our national ardour. Suſpicion would attach to theſe circumſtances, had we no ſtronger clue; but the fact is too fully aſcertained, and let them beware of their impending detection, and expoſition in the face of their injured country. We have countrymen who correſpond with the enemy—We have committees which have delegated perſons to counteract the negociations for peace at Paris and at Liſle†—We have our reſident *revolutionary* plenipotentiary,

* Camille Jordan, in a letter to his conſtituents, lately publiſhed, complains of an aſſertion of an Engliſh Journaliſt who is paid by their Government, (page 43)—" De ce Journaliſt Anglois, ſoldé par notre Gou-" vernment."

† Such a charge, ſome years ſince, would have excited a ſmile; but never could have obtained credit. In that maſterpiece of eloquence and argument, the Speech of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, upon the late motion of Lord Moira, the fact was poſitively affirmed by his Lordſhip; not in vague or equivocal declamation, but upon abſolute proof. The individuals even are known. But ſo inſidiouſly has the Faction endeavoured to aſperſe every aſſertion of his Majeſty's Miniſters, as the offspping of their own alarm, and the fabrication of their own brain, that you will perhaps refuſe credit to his Lordſhip even upon this well ſubſtantiated point. But to aid your conviction, I will ſubmit to you this poſitive avowal by the writer of the official paper of the Rebel Iriſh, The Union Star, No. 8 —After having marked out victims (gentlemen whoſe only crime has been an appeal to the laws of their country againſt murder and rapine) for aſſaſſination, by name and exact deſcription of perſon, the aſſaſſin proceeds—" Iriſhmen! Your country " is repreſented by brethren of ability and virtue—they plead your cauſe at " Liſle, they negociate for an independent Iriſh republic in the teeth of " that diplomatic ſpy, Malmeſbury. They are countenanced and encou-" raged by the French Commiſſioners, and we have ſome hopes that Ire-" land will be ſeen in the political map of Europe, when her cruel ſtep-ſiſter " is conſigned to the inſignificance her crimes juſtly merit. Should ſome " unfortunate event put off your delivery, by England purchaſing an imme-" diate

plenipotentiary, in the capital of France—and councils which have their regular ſittings, throughout this country, and Ireland, to remit and receive reports. Shall I, then, as a Briton, be aſhamed to avow that the blood boils within my veins at the bare reflection upon ſuch vile apoſtacy, ſuch infamous, diabolical, and black treachery?

Theſe are the conſpiracies formed againſt you. They are clear and undoubted. When you meet them thus openly, you arm yourſelves againſt them. The difficulty you have to encounter conſiſts in oppoſing them in their diſguiſed ſtate. We hear much of *liberal principles* and of *univerſal benevolence*: theſe form the advanced guard, to beat down prejudices (as they are termed), to overthrow religion, and ſap the foundation of our temperate and happy Conſtitution. To ſhake off all ſocial and moral obligations; to looſen every tie of nature and feeling; to deny the exiſtence of a God; and to brand the followers of Chriſt with ſuperſtition and hypocriſy, are the firſt data of what are termed *liberal principles.*§ To transfer the love of our own country to the whole world; to acknowledge the inferiority of our own poſſeſſions, whilſt we extol the reſources of rival powers; to conſider men who are armed for our deſtruction as brethren, and every common feeling of patriotiſm as the remnant of

diate peace, you ſhould not deſpond. PEACE WILL BE ONLY TEMPORARY;† it may be productive of ſome political comforts, as we may then openly praiſe and ſtudy the glorious truths France is capable of proclaiming. Communication with that country will be revived, and liberty will gain new ſtrength, and knowledge more univerſal; conſequently Deſpotiſm muſt die, and Iriſhmen will go to the funeral!

† This Gentleman, at leaſt, cannot be miſtaken for an hireling of Miniſtry. He, on the contrary, is in the confidence of a very oppoſite party; yet a higher compliment to the foreſight, prudence, and ſteady ſpirit of our preſent Rulers, could not, I think, be adduced on the ſubject of Peace.

§ Let any man read the daily effuſions of blaſphemy and impiety which appear in the principal Oppoſition papers of this country, and he cannot doubt the purpoſe of their fabricators.

narrow

narrow prejudice, form the broad and extended baſis of *univerſal benevolence.**

Be cautious, then, for theſe are traps for the unwary; and the moſt diabolical doctrines are thus plauſibly recommended: but the poiſon, though rendered palatable, is not the leſs fatal. Talk of the horrors of revolution and anarchy, and you ſpurn the promoters of it; ſpeak of the happy effects of reform, and you liſten to the propoſed advantages. But, believe me, at the preſent criſis, they are one and the ſame thing; varying only in the ſtages of their progreſſion.

One of the ſtrongeſt and moſt favourite engines which the reformers uſe againſt your liberties, is the endeavour to damp your ſpirit, and to impreſs you with an idea of approaching and inevitable deſtruction. They would diſarm you by fears, and overwhelm you with your own apprehenſions. Look around you, and you will ſee that treachery, fomented by the undermining arts of Frenchmen, has every where opened the gates to the enemy. The Correſponding Societies and cabals have been the inſtruments of deſtruction in every ſtate which the French arms have ſubjugated; clubs eſtabliſhed by the loweſt and moſt licentious agents, outlaws and renegadoes, ſanctioned (as we have ſimilar inſtances before our eyes) by intemperate men, who have had ſome ſtake, ſome character to loſe, but whoſe ſelfiſh deſigns of popular elevation have led them to join in the nefarious projects of their deſperate partiſans. Such characters riſe in the tumult, and being checked by no [illegible]ans, overwhelm ſociety with miſery, upon which it is too horrible [illegible] calculate.

I anticipate an obſervation, whic[illegible], indeed, very naturally ariſes from what has juſt been ſaid---How is it poſſible that men who have ſuch a ſtake, who hold rank, fortune, and character in the country, can be led to ſecond opinions of a tendency ſo evidently inimical to their own intereſts. But I lament to ſay, that it is too eaſily ſolved: Firſt, By the phrenzy of ambition, which blinds its followers to

* The ſame papers will afford ample teſtimony of this definition.

every

every thing but the object in point. Secondly, By a ſimple reference to paſt events---the Duc de Rochefaucalt and the Marquis de la Fayette, (without naming the whole phalanx of their noble adherents) men of the moſt exalted rank and diſtinction, ſufficiently illuſtrate it, in having been the firſt movers of the revolution in France. How ſhort, by the bye (as a warning voice to their Engliſh imitators) was their reign! How ſoon were theſe illuſtrious patriots overpowered, baniſhed, or butchered by a party of half-witted abbés and country attornies! In the preſent day (not to ſpeak of the Dutch or Venetian Ariſto-Democrats), have we not beheld the intrigues and treacheries of a Cardinal Pamphili, and a Cardinal Buon Campagne, aiding the cauſe of the enemies of their country, and paving the way for that ſubjection and ruin which now overwhelms deſerted *Rome*.

Diſtinguiſh, then, my fellow citizens, your friends from your foes. Few, indeed, have you (comparatively ſpeaking) of the latter caſt; yet your friends are too eaſy, and betray not ſufficiently that ſpirit of indignation againſt their ſeditious brethren (which contempt indeed may ſuppreſs), on the repeated detection of their unfaithfulneſs to ourſelves, and the attack upon our moſt eſſential intereſts. Let the public voice cry aloud, and ſtrengthen the arm of Government, to puniſh traitors and maintain our rights. Suffer not the inſults of a ſmall, but clamorous and daring, band of men to depreſs your ſpirits or impede your exertions. Spurn them from you, and, as a peſtilence, avoid them. What has been, may be again. And, I repeat to you, every power in Europe that has fallen at the mercy of France, has fallen through the treachery of its own citizens: and though no country on earth can boaſt ſuch good ſenſe, or ſo exalted a patriotiſm, as pervades every branch of ſociety in Great Britain; ſtill, I ſorrow whilſt I ſay it, I fear we form no exception to the general rule---we have unnatural children blended in the maſs ------we have traitors neſtling in our very boſom. I would leave them to their own abortive endeavours, unpitied, unobſerved, did I not perceive the intricate and ſubtle artifices practiſed by them on all ſides---low cunning and craft, that too eaſily may entrap the unſuſpecting.

ſuſpecting. Were they open in their purpoſe——would they boldly avow the principles of their cauſe——I would not diſgrace thoſe which I profeſs, by entertaining an apprehenſion British liberty, and the Britiſh Conſtitution, would never be degraded by an open compariſon with republican deſpotiſm and French ſlavery.

I would prepare you againſt another deſcription of men, whoſe intentions I have no occaſion in this place to notice or inveſtigate. I ſpeak merely to the effect of their conduct upon thoſe who are in the habit of being thrown into their ſociety. Thoſe, I mean, whoſe unmanly fears give giant form to every little failure, and whoſe ſhallow perceptions preclude them from looking beyond the preſent moment. They are perpetually crying out, that we are ruined——that our reſources fail——our ſyſtem totters——our credit ſinks! Depreſſing thus the ſpirits of thoſe connected with them; and adding freſh fuel to the hopes of the common enemy,——when the direct contrary of all this noiſy declamation is the fact. Admitting, however, for an inſtant (which I am unwilling to do) that they were correct, ſuch men, calculating from their own narrow principles, know not the native powers we poſſeſs, nor the renovating energy of this free and bleſſed country.

In the war of 1665-66, &c. with the Dutch, in which they were joined by the French and the Danes, they appeared at ſea with a fleet of 113 ſhips of war, and 11 fireſhips, well manned, and ably commanded; they afterwards formed a junction with 40 French ſhips of the line more. Our ſtanding army at that period conſiſted of only 5000 men, and we had no militia. The country was at the ſame time viſited by a peſtilence, which carried off 80,000 perſons in the metropolis alone. This was ſucceeded by the great fire of London, in which 1300 houſes and 80 pariſh churches were deſtroyed. Fate ſeemed leagued with the enemy for our deſtruction! ——Yet, Britons, hear——Our fleet, though infinitely inferior, met and conquered the foe. The alliance entered into againſt us was broken, and an honourable and advantageous peace obtained.

In the year 1690 the French totally defeated our fleet, joined to that of the Dutch, off Beachey Head. We loſt 8 ſhips of the line, and the ſhattered remnant was obliged to take refuge in the Thames. The French remained for months in the Channel, and *(aided by Engliſh conſpirators in London)* threatened invaſion. There were ſcarce 5000 troops in England, the militia was not arrayed, parties ran high on the diſputed ſucceſſion to the crown, artfully kept alive and fomented by the friends of France; public credit and commerce were ſhaken to their very foundation; the enemy had taken 6000 trading veſſels during the war; Exchequer and Navy bills reduced to little or no value; and the notes of the Bank of England at 40 per cent. diſcount! Here, indeed, were we reduced; here did we appear fallen, and our ſole hope an appeal to the humanity of the enemy! Yet that enemy was fruſtrated in all its views of ambition: a peace was obtained upon moſt honourable terms---the glorious Revolution confirmed---the ſucceſſion ſecured---*the traitors brought to puniſhment*---and public credit fully re-eſtabliſhed!

Contraſt, then, my beloved Countrymen, theſe ſtatements with the ſituation in which we now ſtand. Where are all thoſe evils which in former wars multiplied upon us? Where have our fleets been loſt, or our armies made captive?---of which even the American war will afford us inſtances---that American war, which was deemed the moſt diſaſtrous the country ever beheld; and whoſe effects were dreaded in the overturn of our political conſequence---the deſtruction of our commerce---and the annihilation of our public credit. You ſtill have at the helm the Miniſter who ſnatched us from thoſe inevitable horrors (as they were conſidered by gentlemen who then compoſed, and *ſtill do compoſe*, the Oppoſition), raiſed your credit, revived your commerce, and eſtabliſhed your name from the eaſt unto the weſt. That Miniſter merits the confidence you have placed in him, and will bring us ſafely through all the dangers which environ us at this moment. Be, then, ſatisfied with knowing, that you are the richeſt and moſt proſperous nation under heaven;*

ven;* and that envy at your high happineſs has raiſed up implacable and avaricious enemies, who have loudly pronounced your exiſtence incom-

* I have forborn to diſcuſs the ſubject of Voluntary Subſcription. Such alacrity, ſuch a generous emulation, has pervaded all ranks of ſociety, to alleviate the burthens of the ſtate, that it would be inſulting to offer a farther ſtimulus to men, who, unſolicited, voluntarily and patriotically, have rallied round the ſtandard of their liberty and independence.

I cannot with-hold, however, an obſervation upon the fears which Gentlemen in Oppoſition (my reader, by this time, is acquainted with the various deſcriptions of politicians which I claſs under this head) have continued to feel at the idea of a liſt of the patriotic donors being laid before the public. This (as they themſelves expreſs it) would be *invidiouſly* marking out thoſe who, from *various* motives, have with-held their aſſiſtance. This diſtinction may be invidious, but it is, at leaſt, juſt; and when you view amongſt the national ſubſcribers, ſeamen, ſoldiers, mechanics, and even the moſt menial domeſtics, throwing their mite into the common purſe, you cannot, ſurely, entertain a very high idea of the love of our exalted Patriots and Reformers, who, far from ſtepping forward in a criſis like the preſent, with additional aid, have retrenched their own luxuries and comforts, in which they have been wont to indulge, for the mean purpoſe of evading the common taxes which are neceſſarily impoſed to meet the expences of the year. They profeſs, that they are unwilling to ſubſcribe towards retaining the preſent Miniſtry in power; that is, they are determined to withhold all ſupply, all ſuccour, from their country (however imperiouſly circumſtances may claim them) until you throw the Government into their hands, and replace the preſent able counſellors of his Majeſty with their own hungry paraſites and dependants.

On the books at the Bank being opened, they with one voice exclaimed that the ſubſcription was a farce, and its failure inevitable. When the books began to ſwell with ſums infinitely beyond their expectation, they diſcovered the names of ſome leading men in power, which were dragged forth to prove that none but place-men who were *intereſted in the continuance of the preſent ſyſtem*, had ſupported the contributions. When they found (and to their utter confuſion they have found it) that ſubſcriptions flowed in from all quarters, and that not a corner of the country but felt inſpired with the cauſe, and came forward with their fortunes as well as lives, they again ſhifted their ground; and though but a few days ſince they loaded the Miniſter with reproach for having adopted ſo ſtrong an expedient as the triple aſſeſſment,

incompatible with their own views of aggrandiſement,—who have ſworn your deſtruction!

Be ſatisfied that your country's glory is increaſed beyond all former record; that your fleets are ſyſtematically victorious; and that you have captured poſſeſſions which all the power and machinations of the arrogantly ſelf-ſtiled GREAT NATION cannot wreſt from you. Be ſatisfied, that though the utmoſt efforts of a provident and patriotic Miniſtry towards immediate pacification, conſiſtent with the common ſafety or dignity of the country, have proved unſucceſsful, through the counteracting treachery of internal, and the exterminating ambition of foreign enemies, ſtill that day is at hand when—"They "ſhall ſit, every man under his vine and under his fig-tree."——

THROUGH OUR ENERGY LIES THE ROAD TO PEACE—AND IN OUR RESOURCES TO CONTINUE THE WAR, WE POSSESS OUR ONLY MEANS TO TERMINATE IT. BE FIRM—BE FAITHFUL TO YOURSELVES, AND YOU ARE INVULNERABLE!

ment, they now, with undaunted aſſurance, cry out againſt him for not having purſued the meaſure farther, in preference to what they (with an attempt at malicious witticiſm) term a Mendicant Plan—a Public Begging Box. Thoſe whoſe confined principles lead them to confound the paſſing appeal to our compaſſion of an itinerant beggar, with the liberal ſenſations which prompt aſſiſtance to a beloved friend, are moſt probably capable of reconciling ſuch contradictions *to themſelves at leaſt*,—I own that I am not.

I always feel inclined to avoid, if poſſible, public diſquiſition on the characters of individuals on either ſide the queſtion; yet I cannot ſatisfy my own feelings without contraſting the *refined patriotiſm* of the party I have above mentioned, with the *old-faſhioned bluntneſs* of the following tranſcript, taken *verbatim* from the ſubſcription book at the Bank—

"Lord Somerville gives annually, until the end of the war, the *fifth* "*of his clear income*, in full confidence, that when ſuch a period ſhall arrive, "the people of England will ſee the good policy of having applied the *fifth* "of all aſcertained income to the relief of the aſſeſſed taxes, partial in their "operation, becauſe they touch not the *niggard* or the *diſaffected*."

FINIS.

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